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St. Epiphanius interprets it in the same way: "Because he (Peter) confessed that Christ was the Son of the living God, he heard in his turn, upon this rock of solid faith I will build my Church."

St. Augustine admits, in his *Retractions*, that he had himself given different interpretations to this passage. "I have spoken in a certain place of the Apostle Peter, that to him as on a rock the Church is built; but I very often have afterwards so expounded, that it should be understood of Him whom Peter confessed. For it was not said to him, 'Thou art the rock,' but 'Thou art Peter.' For the rock was Christ. But let the reader choose which of these two opinions is the more probable one."

One of these numerous passages, to which St. Augustine above refers, may be found in his treatise on the Gospel of St. John—"On this rock which you have confessed I will build my Church; for the rock was Christ, on which foundation Peter himself was also built. For no one can lay any foundation but that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Another remarkable passage in St. Augustine may be found in his 13th Sermon on the words of our Lord, in which he says, "Christ was the Rock, Peter figuratively the Christian people. . . . Therefore, He said 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock which thou hast confessed, I will build my Church;' that is, I will build my Church on Myself, the Son of the living God. I will build thee on Myself; not Myself on thee. For men willing to build upon men said, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, that is Peter. But others who were unwilling to be built on Peter, but would be built upon the rock, said, But I am of Christ. But the Apostle Paul, when he knew that he was chosen and Christ condemned, said, 'Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptised in the name of Paul? Wherefore as not in the name of Paul, so not in that of Peter; but in the name of Christ, that Peter may be built upon the rock, not the rock upon Peter.'"

No one, after reading the foregoing extracts, can, we think, doubt what was the result of St. Augustine's mind upon this matter, and that it was ultimately unfavourable to the interpretation which the modern Church of Rome relies on as the only true one.

Theodore in 1 Corinthians iii. 11., expounding the Apostle's words: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ," says, "It behoves us to build, not to destroy foundations; for he who wishes to build wisely, cannot lay any other foundation. This foundation the blessed Peter laid, or rather our Lord himself. For when Peter said, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,' the Lord said, 'On this rock I will build my Church.' Therefore, be ye not called by the name of men, for Christ is the foundation."

One question alone remains. Is it possible to reconcile

in templum sanctum, in habitaculum ipsius; habitat enim in cordibus nostris per fidem. Fundamenta etiam proxima et viciniora nobis intelligi possunt, Apostoli et Evangelistae. . . . Ab ipso enim dicitur est divinus Petrus, (quando apostolus et inculpat fides in ipsum confessus est, dicens: Tu es Christus filius Dei viventis). Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram edificabo Ecclesiam meam; petram, apertor, vocans, immotam fidem discipuli."

[Πέτρον οὖν λέγων τὸν ἀκράδαντον εἰς πῖνιν τῆς μαθῆτραις.]

* Epiphanius heres. 59, sec. 7, lib. II. Tom. I., p. 503. Paris, Petrus, 1622. Ed.—Qui quidem solidæ petreæ instar nobis extitit cui velut fundamentum Domini dedit instituit, supra quam Ecclesiam modis omnibus extruxit. Imprimis quidem, quod Christum Dei vivi filium esse confessus est, idque vicissim auditi, supra hanc solidæ fidei petram edificabo Ecclesiam meam."

* St. Augustine, *Retractions*, lib. I., c. 21, Tom. I., p. 32. Ben. Ed. 1679.—"Dixi in quodam loco de Apostolo Petro, quod in eo tanquam in petra fundata sit Ecclesia. . . . Sed solo me postea sepius in die exposuisti, ut supra hunc intelligeretur quem confessus est Petrus. Non enim dictum est illi: Tu es petra, sed tu es Petrus. Petrus autem erat Christus. Harum autem duarum sententiarum quæ sit probabilior, eligat lector."

* St. Augustine, Tract 124, seu ult. in Evangel. Johanni, Tom. 3, p. 2, 822. Ben. Ed.—"Cujus Ecclesie Petrus Apostolus propter Apostolatus sui primatum q. rebat figurat generalitate personam. . . . sed quando id dictum est, tibi dabo claves regni cœli, etc., universam significat ecclesiam quæ in hoc seculo diversis tentationibus, velut imbribus, fluminibus, tempestatibusque quatitur, et non cadit; quoniam fundata est super petram, unde Petrus nomen accepit; non enim a Petro petra, sed Petrus a petra, sicut non Christus a Christiano, sed Christianus a Christo vocatur; ideo quippe ait Dominus super hanc petram edificabo Ecclesiam meam; quia dixit Petrus, Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi. Super hanc ergo (inquid) petram quam confessus es, edificabo Ecclesiam meam. Petrus enim erat Christus super quod fundamentum etiam ipse edificatus est Petrus. Fundamentum quippe aliud nemo potest ponere præter id quod positum est, quod est Christus Filius Dei vivi."

* "Hoc autem et nomen ut Petrus appellaretur, a Domino imposuit est; et hoc in ea signa ut significaret Ecclesiam. Quia enim Christus Petrus, Petrus populus Christianus. Petrus enim principale nomen est. Ideo Petrus a petra, non petra a Petro: quomodo non a Christiano Christus, sed a Christo Christianus vocatur. Tu es ergo, inquit, Petrus, et super hanc petram quam confessus es, super hanc petram quam cognovi, dicens, Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi, edificabo Ecclesiam meam: id est, super me ipsum. Filius Dei vivi, edificabo Ecclesiam meam. Super me edificabo te; non me super te."

* Nam volentes homines edificari super homines dicebant, ego quidem sum Paulus, ego autem Apollos, ego vero Cephas, ipse est Petrus. Alii qui volebant edificari super Petrum sed super petram, Ego autem sum Christi. Apostolus autem Paulus ubi cognovit se eligi et Christum confemal: Divinus est, inquit, Christus? Numquid Paulus pro vobis crucifixus est? Aut in nomine Pauli baptizati estis? Quando non in Pauli, sed nec in Petri; sed in nomine Christi, ut Petrus edificaretur super petram, non petra super Petrum." Sermo lxxvi. Sermo 13, de verbis Domini, cap. I., section I. Opera. Tom. v., p. 475.

* "Opus est edificare non fundamenta destruere. Neque enim alius potest jaceré fundamentum, qui vult sapienter edificare. Hoc fundamentum jecit beatus Petrus, vel potius ipse Dominus. Cum enim dixerit Petrus, Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi, dixit Dominus, super hanc petram edificabo Ecclesiam meam. Ne vos ergo dominati ab hominibus, Christus enim est fundamentum." Theod. Opera., tom. 3, p. 133. Paris, 1642.

all these great authorities with the others above referred to as relied on by the Church of Rome? For though we as Protestants rely on the Scriptures alone, we think it a matter of great interest to show that the great doctors of the Church are not really at issue among themselves, when treating of the Scriptures they so much revered.

On one theory, viz., that of the modern Church of Rome, it is impossible; on the other, that of the Church of England, it is easy. The differences, in fact, as has been well observed by an able modern writer, "are more apparent than real." For whether we speak of the act of confession, or the faith confessed, or of Christ, who is the supreme object, or of the principle subjectively considered, either in the body of the Apostles, or in Peter, as representing them, the prevailing idea is one and the same. It makes, however, a very important difference whether Peter is spoken of as the type of a principle common to his colleagues and to all Christians, or whether he is considered as pre-eminent on account of a gift peculiar to himself: the former is what the primitive writers really affirm; the latter is the gloss which Romanists are anxious to put upon their statements."

What we require is, the production of some clear primitive testimony, that by the application of this text personally to St. Peter his supreme power over the whole Church was understood; but for that we have searched in vain, and we think we may confidently assert that nothing of this kind is to be found.

We now proceed to the other branch of the passage, (v. 19) in which our Blessed Lord says: "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in the heavens, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed in the heavens."

That the power here promised was identical with that afterwards actually given to all the Apostles, we have already shown in a former article; but the same thing will, in fact, appear clearly to any candid inquirer upon merely reading the passages in St. Matthew xviii. 18 John xx. 23.

St. Matthew xviii. 18:—"Amen, I say to you (i.e., to the disciples whom he was addressing), whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

John xx. 22-23—"When he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."—(Douay Bible.)

In order to try to evade this consequence, some writers have attempted an ill-founded and over subtle distinction between the power of the keys and that of binding and loosing; but even Cardinal Bellarmine, anxious as he was to maintain the Papal power at the highest point, admits that such a distinction is unfounded, and that they are really identical ("ut omnino sit idem solvere et aperire, claudere et ligare").

The Fathers are also express upon this subject.

St. Jerome says in express words that "all the Apostles did receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

So Theophylact—"Although it be spoken to Peter alone, I will give thee; yet it is given to all the Apostles."

So also Ambrose—"I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that you may bind and loose; what is said to Peter, is said to the Apostles."

Also Origen—"Are the keys of the kingdom of Heaven given by the Lord to Peter alone, and shall none other of the blessed ones receive them? But, if this, I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, be common; how also are not all the things common, which were spoken before, or are added as spoken to Peter?"

So the learned Rigalt in his commentary on the epistles of Firmilian, says—"He said to Peter, I will give thee the keys; but he said not, I will give them to thee alone."

St. Chrysostom makes it part of the character of St. John—"He that hath the keys of the Heavens."

St. Augustine explains and reconciles all the passages by holding that what was promised to Peter, and afterwards given to all the rest of the Apostles, was spoken to Peter in a representative capacity on behalf of them all.

"Peter," says he, "in many places in the Scriptures, appears as representing the Church, but especially where it is said to him, 'I will give you the keys.' Has Peter received these keys, and has not Paul received them? Has

Peter received them, and not James and John, and the rest of the Apostles?"

Passages to the same effect might easily be multiplied; but these already given are, we think, enough to satisfy any impartial mind that if the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven do impart supreme power, then each Apostle had supreme power, and St. Peter had no supremacy over the rest of the Apostles, which he could hand down to his successors; supposing it were as clearly established as we have already proved it is not, that the Bishops of Rome are entitled exclusively to that title.

Any one who will consult the proceedings of the Council of Paris in the 8th century, or even those of the Council of Constance, or Council of Basle, in the 15th century, will see how little unanimity exists among Roman Catholics themselves in confining the giving of the keys to the successors of St. Peter, and how large and important a part of those in external communion with the Church of Rome for many centuries claim for all bishops the power of binding and loosing, as flowing to them directly from Christ, without any reference to the successors of St. Peter, even admitting the Pope to be such successor.

The learned Roman Catholic historian, Dupin, goes even farther; for he affirms that "the Fathers are unanimous in assigning ecclesiastical power, either to the Church generally, or to the Apostles, and after them to Bishops; that there is not one to be found who holds it to have been given to Peter and his successors alone; that they have guarded against any wrong inference that might be drawn from the promise given to Peter, by showing that he was regarded merely as the representative of the Church." He says that "the number of passages that might be cited on the subject is infinite; that, in fact, there is scarcely an ecclesiastical writer who would not furnish one."

If anything were wanting to show that our Lord did not intend to confer any personal pre-eminence upon St. Peter over the rest of the Apostles in this passage, we think the severe rebuke administered to him in the 23rd verse, following so close upon his confession, would supply it. We cannot, indeed, look upon this rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan," as other than a providential guard and warning against deducing, from the previous blessing promised on his prompt confession, any such unwarrantable conclusion as has just been attempted to be drawn from it by ultramontane divines.

Having occupied so much (but, we trust, not too much) space in considering this often quoted portion of Scripture, which, but for the zeal with which men will always defend a position once taken up, we might well be surprised should have been so confidently relied on in support of the Papal Supremacy, we must reserve the consideration of the remaining texts, Luke xxii. 32; and John xxi. 15-17, until our succeeding number.

THE DUMB VILLAGE.

CHAP. V.

THE scene which Tom Connell dreaded was now over. But, though so far relieved and light of heart, a painful and disturbing impression had been left by it upon his mind. That some deep mental inquietude had wasted Father M.'s cheek, and produced unusual agitation and nervousness of manner, was quite apparent. Tom was, however, too keen to set this wholly down to the state of things in the village, or to rumours of his own disaffection. The root of the matter, it was plain, went deeper, though where it lay passed his philosophy to explain. Of the conflict in the good priest's mind he was, of course, wholly ignorant; and, entirely unsuspecting of the circumstances which gave its peculiar character to the recent interview, he was quite puzzled to account for it. Expecting strong rebuke, he had met with a tenderness of address which both surprised and touched him. It was, in fact, the gentle and softened manner of Father M. which had encouraged him to speak so unreservedly. The scene itself was altogether so different from his fears and anticipations, that, though feeling much more at ease when it was over, the faithful fellow's heart began to bleed, as he walked slowly away, under the conviction that a secret sorrow was preying upon the heart of his dear friend, which he would be unable to soothe, because he could not comprehend it.

Tom's affectionate thoughts soon began to work busily. "Sure enough," he muttered, "he has been looking very daway this long time, but I never thought as much as I ought about it. What can be the matter with him, I wonder? I used to think he would be fretting about the Scripture-readers and myself; but it's something beyond that, or he wouldn't be so kind and humble like, nor let me go on as I did. I have it!" said he at last, smiting his thigh with great and startling energy—"I have it, as

* Aug. Sermo 149, Tom. II, p. 708—"Petrus in multis locis scripturam apparat quod personam gestat Ecclesie, maxime in illo ubi dictum est, Tibi dabo claves. Nunquid istas claves Petrus accepit, et Paulus non accepit? Petrus accepit, et Johannes et Jacobus non accepit, et ceteri Apostoli?"—Father Launoy cites twenty-six passages to the same effect from St. Augustine. Epist. Lib. II. Ep. 5, p. 218, &c.

* On n'en trouvera pas un qui ait avancé que cette puissance ait été donnée à S. Pierre et à ses successeurs seuls, afin qu'ils la communiquassent à l'Eglise: au contraire, on en verra plusieurs qui craignent qu'on ne tirât cette fausse conséquence de la promesse que Jésus Christ a faite à S. Pierre de lui donner les clefs de l'Eglise, remarquant que S. Pierre représentait l'Eglise en cette rencontre, et que c'est à l'Eglise à qui Jésus Christ les a promises en la personne de S. Pierre. On pourroit apporter un nombre infini de passages sur ce sujet. Il n'y a presque point d'auteur ecclésiastique qui ne fournisse quelque chose. —Dupin in Traité de l'Autorité Ecclésiastique, tom. II, p. 16.

* The Rev. Saunderson Robins on the evidence of Scripture against the claims of the Roman Church. London: Longman and Co., 1853.

* CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. II, p. 27.

* Bellarmine de Rom. Pont. lib. I. c. 12 p. 327, c. p. 1608.

* Hier. Advers. Jov. lib. II. Tom. IV., part II., p. 164. Paris, 1706.

* Ben. ed. "Licet id ipse in alio loco super omnes Apostolos fiat, ut cuncti claves regni cœli accipiant."

* Et γὰρ καὶ πρὸς Πέτρον μόνον εἶρηται το, δώσω σοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις δίδωται.—Theophyl.

in loco.—Tom. I., p. 85. Venet. 1754.

* Tibi dabo claves regni cœli, ut et solvas et liges. Quod Petro dicitur, Apostolis dicitur.—Ambrose in Psalm xxviii. last verse.

Opera, tom. I., p. 858; no. 37. Paris, 1686. Ben. ed.

* Quoniam in Matt. xii. Tom. III., no. 11. Oper. Tom. 3, p. 525.

Paris, 1740. Ben. ed.

* Dixit Petro, dabo tibi claves, at non dixit, Dabo tibi sol.

* Rigalt Observations in Epist. Cyrilian. Epist. 75, p. 148. Paris, 1648.

* Ο ἅς κλεῖς ἔχων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.—Chrysos. in

Evangel. John, Huan. I., p. 2., Oper. Tom. 8. Paris,

1728. Ben. ed.

sure as eggs—his heart is broke, and it's *that* man has done it."

What man do you mean, Tom? What is the matter with you, now? What makes your brows knit, as if you would draw them one into the other? Why does your cheek redden into heated crimson, and your hands clench in that fiery sort of way? You seemed changed at once into an angry and indignant man—what can ail you?

"That's just it: I see it all now. How could I have missed it so long?" And Tom, in his great excitement, strode away at a rate which soon brought him to his own door. He was met, as he entered, by the salutation—

"A good morning to you, Mither Connell. I'm waiting to see you. I've got a bit of an order for you; and it's not Father M. has sent it. How did you find him this morning? I suppose you're thicker than ever."

"What do you want here?" said Tom, with a fierce abruptness of answer which quite startled his questioner, and brought to his lips the message with which he was charged much more quickly than he had intended to deliver it. For, being a malevolent poor creature, and a determined partizan of the new priest's, he hoped to use to the utmost the opportunity, which he thought he now possessed, of annoying Connell, whom he hated heartily.

"If you're at leisure after your visit to Father M., the priest would be glad to have a few words of conversation with you—more, I'm thinking, than you'll like to hear; and, while I was waiting for you, I thought I'd just be talking to the good woman here about the bad example you were setting to the children."

"Did the priest tell you to do that?" said Tom.

"Oh, dear, no. It was all out of friendship, you persuade, that I was giving Mithress Connell a bit of good advice."

"And I'll give you another, in return for it," replied her husband; "and it's this—if something stronger than myself did not put down the anger within me, you would leave my door quicker, I promise you, than you entered it."

"And what might that be—if I may be so bold as to ask?"

"The power of God, I hope," said Tom, calmly now.

"Oh, ho! is that the way with you?" said the messenger, hurrying fast enough away. "So you are, then, turning souper! It's lucky I heard you say so much, at all events. The power of the Church wouldn't satisfy the likes of you, but you must have arguments to please you! I'm thinking, however, my fine fellow, you'll find, to your cost, that Father S. is just the man likely to put a ring in your nose, if you must go rooting for reasons."

"What ails you, Tom, darling?" said his wife, uneasy at her husband's unusual disturbance of manner. "You surely don't think I would mind what that bad man says."

"I'll tell you what," said Tom, laying his strong hand heavily upon her shoulder, and looking earnestly into her face, "Father M.'s heart's broke, and it's my belief that the new priest has his hand in the doing of it."

"God keep us from harm," said his alarmed wife. "What on earth makes you think so?"

"I tell you," said he—giving vent to his own feelings rather than heeding her question—"they have broke between them the kindest heart that ever beat. He couldn't stand being made light of in his own parish. It's little the likes of him could bear a spy being put upon him. The best friend we ever had, Ellen, on this earth is going down in sorrow to his grave. And now," said Tom, taking up his hat hastily and striding towards the door, "that Father S. wants me. I'll be with him pretty soon, and tell him a bit of my mind besides."

"Tom," called his wife.

"What is it?" said he, turning back.

"Think of the good book."

The admonition came seasonably. Tom's excellent wife knew that her husband, though a man of thorough good temper, and patient of personal wrong, had great warmth of affection, and was prone to feel keenly, and resent indignantly any injury to those whom he loved. She saw him now to be strongly excited, and, knowing how little he dreaded the imperious man who had summoned him to his presence, she feared his resolute character would lead him, stirred as he then was, to speak too boldly. Hence her caution, which proved as effectual as it was wise.

Tom was calmed by it, and thankful for it. His first impression, on receiving the message from the new priest, was, that his visit to Father M. had been watched (as it really was), and that the object of the present summons was to get something out of him to his friend's disadvantage. He liked the manner of the messenger, too, as little as the message itself. Because he saw in it somewhat of suppressed exultation, which led him to think the new priest intended to "make a show of him." So, had not better thoughts succeeded his first strong impulse, Tom was just the man to have made them and there "a clean breast of it," and told out his mind pretty decisively. The mention of "the good book" operated, however, like a charm upon him. So he resolved, with God's help, to bear patiently the rough catechising which he anticipated. Determined, however, to baffle to the utmost all attempts to get out of him anything about Father M., and determined, moreover, if opportunities should offer, to test the priest's powers of controversy.

In this state of mind he soon stood before Father S., who, with several of the party most hostile to the Scripture-readers, had been impatiently expecting him.

Tom saw at a glance, as he entered the room, their looks of ill-concealed triumph at the prospect of discomfiture and humiliation which they reckoned to be in store for him. But, as he often said afterwards, "It only made me, somehow or other, feel as strong as a giant. I knew they were just as much set against Father M. as myself."

"You paid a long visit to Father M. this morning," was his first salutation from the priest.

"You're at him already," thought Tom. "It's but little, however, you'll get out of me."

"I did," was the reply.

"You will be good enough to tell me the subject of your conversation."

"May I be so bold," said Tom, very quietly, "as to ask why you want to know?"

"That's no concern of yours, sir. Answer me at once."

"I would be bad manners to repeat a conversation without leave. But," said Tom, looking very straight at his interrogator, "I'll just step over to Father M. and tell him you want to know, and then, if he gives me permission, you shall have it, for all Tom Connell cares."

"No, no," said the priest, who did not quite relish this, and felt himself not a little foiled by Tom's apparent innocence. "I see I had good reason for my suspicion. You are afraid to tell."

"And why so?" replied Tom, looking at the priest more steadily still.

"Because, you and he—that is—I just wanted to know."

"There's little doubt of that same, and I'm thinking, too, you wouldn't long keep that knowledge to yourself, once you had it," thought our friend.

"Well, then, sir," said the priest, who began to get a little nettled at Tom's unexpected composure, "it is reported to me that you are about turning heretic. Is that true?"

"How odd," said Tom, looking up quite demurely. "That's just the very first question Father M. asked me, too."

"Indeed," interposed his questioner pretty briskly now, because, though not quite expecting that reply, he yet thought, as Tom's tongue was once loosed, he might ferret out of him something to Father M.'s disadvantage.

"And what answer did you make him?"

"Well, indeed, I just told him the plain truth. I said you were the cause of it all."

"Me!" exclaimed the priest, not more astounded at such an unexpected impeachment upon his thorough-going orthodoxy, than vexed to be so completely foiled by this sudden turning of the tables upon himself, in his attempt to ascertain—what he very much wanted to know—the state of Father M.'s feelings. "Me the cause of heresy!"

"Just so," responded Tom, very composedly. "You, yourself. Neither more nor less. If I'm a heretic, it's you who have made me one. You've done the same for others, too, besides me, as you'll find out before long. That's what I told Father M."

"How dare you venture upon such a falsehood? I warn you not to attempt any trifling with me," replied the priest.

"I'm not trifling a bit," said Tom. "You've done more to help the Scripture-readers than any one I know of. They think you their best friend, and I'm quite of one mind with them there."

"Their best friend! Why, I've cursed them over and over again, as well as all others who have any intercourse with them."

"True for you, sir," said Tom, "so you have. But lips 'full of cursing' isn't like good religion, any how. So they say, at all events. And so you have helped them a bit there, too. But that's not what I meant."

"What do you mean? Speak out, sir, plainly, and at once," exclaimed the priest, now thoroughly angry.

"Well, then, if I must, I must; and so, here goes. I'll just ask your reverence two questions. Isn't it true we are always told there isn't one mite or morsel of difference in doctrine among Catholics, and that the Church has settled everything for us?"

"Quite true," replied the priest. "The holy Catholic Church, which can never err because she is infallible, has determined everything. Catholics can neither differ among themselves, nor ever go wrong, because they have all their doctrines from the Church."

"That's just what we all thought. For Father M.—God be good to him—never told us anything else, and there was no better Catholic in the place than myself. But things took a queer change when you came among us. Father M. told us the Pope wasn't infallible, and you said he was. We used almost to laugh at the Scripture-readers for saying that we couldn't settle the greatest point of all among ourselves, and that Catholics had greater differences than Protestants, and were fighting among themselves, as bad as others. They said, it surely was an odd thing that we should be claiming infallibility, and yet not one among us could tell where it could be found; and that, as we could neither settle nor

hide our own quarrels, people who lived in glass houses should not throw stones. But we didn't mind what they said, because we didn't believe them, until it came out that your reverence told us one thing, after Father M. told us another. And, so, if it wasn't for yourself, we wouldn't have cared anything about the matter. But you just proved what they said, and did all the mischief."

It would be hard to say whether the priest's wrath or confusion at this moment was the greater. And he saw, too, by the looks of his party, that affairs were taking a turn just as serious for himself, as different from their expectations. Instead of discovering, as he had hoped, something to Father M.'s disadvantage, he now found himself most unexpectedly charged with being the cause of all the evil which he thought to fasten on another. The thrust came home to him, and, being utterly unprepared for it, his perplexity was the greater. Deceived by Tom's apparent simplicity, he now began to doubt whether his decisive defence of his friend might not be an instance of dexterity rather than the result of accident, and that he had to deal with one who was not quite the fool he took him to be.

In truth, our friend Tom Connell knew perfectly well what he was doing. Determined to foil the priest's inquiries (which he strongly suspected) about Father M., he had contrived not only to do this in a most effectual manner, but had also, with much ingenuity, though apparently without any design, completely carried the war into the enemy's camp, and put him upon his defence. In reality, he was just as shrewd as he was faithful. But his good nature being always uppermost, few persons thought him the clever fellow he was. He had stated the truth exactly. It was the difference between the two priests which made Tom think deeply on the matter. And he very soon saw the utter absurdity of a Church claiming to be infallible, and yet, being unable to decide (he soon perceived why?) where its infallibility was to be found. But he saw still farther than this. For he perceived also, that the Church of Rome, though denouncing the exercise of "private judgment," and ever loudly proclaiming its dangers, could not, in reality, do without it. Since she must appeal to it, and could not appeal to anything else, to judge of the force of the proofs which she adduced even for this, her vital doctrine. To use his own strong phrase, "He felt he had been humbugged." The building couldn't be stronger than the foundation. "That I saw," said Tom, "and I saw, too, that, after all, it was a Protestant foundation, and couldn't be anything else, and it made me half mad to think I had been such a fool as not to see this long ago." A few visits which he paid to the parson had quite cleared up the subject to his satisfaction, and determined his change of religion.

Tom saw the priest's perplexity at his unexpected charge against him, and being bent on trying to draw him out, he said, before the other had made up his mind what to answer,

"Your reverence may, I think, mend the matter even now—and there are more, maybe, than you suppose, who would like to hear what you say—by telling us who is in the right? and what poor people like us are to do, when their priests are, as I may say, at daggers drawn about things which never came into their heads until their betters forced it on them?"

"My good friend," said the priest, who saw the necessity of mastering his anger, and making the best of a bad business, "you have nothing to say to these things. There are certain matters which the Catholic Church has not decided, because it was not necessary for her to do so. It is quite enough for you to believe that she cannot err."

"One would think," said Tom, with much apparent simplicity, "that Mr. Williams almost knew your reverence's thoughts. For that's just the very answer he told me I'd be sure to get. 'And Mr. Connell,' says he, 'did you never hear of the little boys trying to catch birds by putting a pinch of salt upon their tails.' 'I did,' says I. 'And then, says he, laughing in the quiet way he has, 'Isn't it very like the way you have of looking for the infallibility of your Church. You'll find it, if it will only wait for you. But just as you think you have it, it's off, like the birds, leaving you,' says he smiling, 'looking like the little boys, and like something else, too.'"

"Never mind what you hear," replied the priest. "You have no business to think at all about the matter. This is the consequence of talking with heretics on such subjects. Give it up, sir, at once, and attend to what I say. Obedience to his superiors is the sure mark of a good Catholic."

"I suppose so," said Tom. "One must give up their reason, and never think at all, to be a member of the true Church. Just in the same way as I heard tell of people who put out the eyes of their canary birds to make them sing the better. Isn't that it, your reverence?"

This dire disparagement was more than the priest could bear, especially as he heard a suppressed laugh from some one beside him. So he abruptly said to Connell,

"We must put an end to this. Speak out plain, sir; are you a heretic?"

"I'll own to your reverence," was the answer. "I find it terrible hard to answer some of the things I hear. But if you would make me clear about this same authority of the Church, I think it would set me all to rights. It's here, says one; it's there, says another. Everything depends on it, and nobody can settle it."

It's so big, and yet so hard to find. I'm fairly puzzled about it. And I think to myself of a story I heard long ago of a cunning chap who said he could go into a quart bottle, and when all the people were waiting with their mouths wide open to see him do it, he just says to them, 'I'm sorry to disappoint you; but I have searched the whole town, and I can't get a quart bottle large enough.' And it seems, begging your reverence's pardon, as if the Church, with all the great talk about her infallibility, and never telling us where she has put it, is just like the conjurer who could not get a quart bottle big enough for him to get into."

"Give up your illustrations, sir," said the priest. "It will be all the better for you."

"I'm no scholar," answered Tom; "I'm only trying to make out what I mean. I he-erd say there's a great Protestant Bishop up in Dublin who wrote a most beautiful book, which would teach people to speak well, and argufy right, just as nicely as you could measure a piece of corduroy with a yard, and as off-hand as your reverence would say 'come kiss me, miss.' I wish he had been down here; for they say he's a great one for wanting poor folk to be taught how to do things right. But, as I have no learning, I must put things in my own way."

"Well, your reverence, it seems an odd thing all out to say, that God's Word is so hard and dangerous a book, that if poor people honestly try to make out the meaning they are almost sure to go wrong. It appears like saying the great God couldn't speak plain when He wanted to do so, and that the Church can do what He couldn't. Isn't that a hard thing. An' if I must give up my reason for fear I should make a mistake, it seems to me almost the same thing, as if I were to take to eating my dinner like the poor savages, with my fingers, for fear I might cut my hand with a knife."

"If God Almighty gave me reason and common sense, I can't understand why it's wrong to use them in religion, while it's right to use them in everything else. But I'm always told, 'Don't dare to do so—you'll ruin your soul if you do. Look at the poor Protestants, and see what they are.' Isn't it a hard thing, I says to myself, that I must give up being a man (an' myself six foot high, into the bargain), in order to be a Catholic. I know very well that reason, as well as everything else good, may lead us astray, if we don't use it properly. But, when I'm told it's very bad and dangerous to use it at all, an' when I'm bid to swallow right down all I'm told, without daring once to look at it, it seems like as if your reverence were to say to me, 'It's true, Tom Connell, that God gave you a pair of fine strong legs, but, for all that, you'll find it easier and better to take to crutches for the rest of your days.'"

"You are well drilled, I perceive," said the priest; "and, from your disrespectful way of speaking, I have no doubt you are on the way to heresy and destruction. You talk of your reason! Where have you any, I'd like to know, when you dare to set up yourself to judge of the Catholic Church? She puts down all differences. Disputes belong to reasoning and Protestants—unity and faith to Catholics."

"No doubt," replied Tom; "the best way to stop a man talking is to cut his tongue out. But it kills me outright when I'm told I must give up my reason in order to stop disputes about faith, and when I find disputes as bad as ever among those who do. I wouldn't mind giving my leg to be cut off to save my life, but I'd keep it on if I must die. An' just so, I'd give up my reason, if it could do all this good. But it doesn't, and can't. Catholics who are ordered never to read their Bible, and never to use their own judgment, lest they should go wrong, dispute just as bad as Protestants. It looks like 'shearing a pig—great cry and little wool.'"

"I tell you again, you are wrong, sir. There are no differences nor disputes among Catholics," interposed the priest.

"What's the use of your talking in that way, your reverence?" said Tom. "An'n I to believe my own ears? Didn't I hear you plainly contradict Father M.? and didn't I hear of terrible quarrelling all out about the Blessed Virgin. I'm sure I saw with my own eyes in a fine book that the Jesuits and others used to be fighting like mad. It's too bad for you to be saying this. I can't take your reverence's word agin my eyes and ears. That's almost as bad as a story I heerd of a great omadhawn of a sailor who took his comrade on his shoulder, when he was only stunned from a ball that passed by his ear, to carry him down to the doctor, who was hard at work in a great battle cutting off legs and arms. 'You big goose,' says the doctor, scarcely looking at the poor fellow, and thinking him dead, 'what do you bring me a dead man for? Haven't I enough to do? Go throw him overboard.' An' as he went to do as he was bid, the poor fellow who was in the swoon, comes to himself, and calls out, 'What are you doing with me, Bill?' 'You're dead,' says Bill, 'and I'm going to throw you overboard.' 'I'm not dead, Bill,' says he. 'You are, I tell you,' says the other, 'Didn't the doctor say so, and do you know better than he?' and with that, he tosses him right into the sea."

"Now, don't we see the quarrels between our own priests, and don't we hear of a great many more. Yet you want us to believe there's no such thing. Sure, that's just to make your reverence like the doctor who thought he knew better than the man himself whether he was

alive or no, and to make us like 'the born fool' of a sailor, to believe him."

The priest could stand it no longer. The last illustration provoked him beyond bearing, especially as he found it had been keenly relished by the bystanders, who listened in utter amazement to the way in which (as they said) "Tom Connell stuck up to the priest." His inveterate habit of using an illustration, whenever he wanted an argument, had been very amusing. So that some among them almost forgot their hostility, in enjoyment of a scene which turned out so contrary to their expectations. The new priest was liked by none, and feared by all. And it must be confessed they were not altogether sorry to see his obvious perplexity. This was in reality very great. Because, being a man who had ever thought the terrors of the Church to be the best argument in the world, he neither sought nor cared for any other. So that even Tom Connell found it easy enough to put difficulties which he was unable to answer. He would not, indeed, have borne the discussion which occurred, were it not, that being confounded at the charge made against him, he feared, because of the suspiciousness of his character, if unanswered, it might operate against him. This gave our friend Tom the opportunity which he used so well, until the priest could endure no longer, and bade him "begone for an obstinate heretic."

Tom left him, having perfectly succeeded in all he wanted, and fully assured that, before the day was over, most of his illustrations would be in the mouth of every man, woman, and child in the village.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville street.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber.

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In consequence of several persons having returned copies of the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, which had been already paid for by friends, under the apprehension that they might be called on hereafter in person to pay for them, we beg to call their attention to the following announcement—viz., that any one receiving any number of this journal which has not been ordered by himself or by his authority, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

The Catholic Layman.

' DUBLIN, DECEMBER 18, 1856.

In concluding the fifth year of our labours in the cause of truth and free inquiry, we trust our readers will not accuse us of idle boasting or vain-glory, if we venture to address a few words of encouragement and congratulation, as well to those who have so efficiently and perseveringly contributed their talents and learning to the support of the work, as to those through whose liberality the heavy pecuniary expenses of the undertaking have been hitherto in great part defrayed.

It must be obvious, we should suppose, to all who know anything of the labour and expense of carrying on with efficiency any literary periodical that our paper never could have been rationally embarked in as a matter of *pecuniary speculation*, and that if the contributors had required even the lowest scale of remuneration ever accorded to literary labour in any department, it would have been impossible to have carried on, for even a single year, a *stamped* monthly periodical, consisting of over 30 closely printed columns, at the very low charge of 3s. 6d. per annum.

It is also equally clear that reputation, either literary or religious, was not the object of the contributors, as, we believe, not a single article has ever appeared in our pages under the signature, or even the initials, of any of them.

Can our readers, then, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, believe that the conductors have had any other motive for their exertions than that of advancing what they profoundly believe to be the cause of truth and piety?

We think we may also appeal, with some confidence, to all classes of our readers, whether we have not practically acted up to the professions of candour, kindness, and fair play, with which we commenced this periodical, and which we have

reasserted from time to time so frequently in its pages.

The amount of public favour the CATHOLIC LAYMAN has received, and the consequent unusually large extent of its circulation (never under 10,000 copies per month for more than three years past), has so much exceeded our most sanguine expectations, that we cannot but feel grateful to God, as well as to the many influential friends He has raised up for it, for the signal success which has attended our attempt to give a milder tone, and perhaps a deeper current, to the great controversy of the day in Ireland.

If we have done anything to soften ancient hostilities, or break down hereditary prejudices between different classes of our fellow-countrymen, or to show Protestants what Roman Catholics, and Roman Catholics what Protestants can say in defence of their respective religions, we think we have not lived or written altogether in vain.

That we have not done more to reconcile religious differences, or to gain victory for truth on whichever side it is, has been not so much our fault as that of others, who would not meet us amicably in the fair and manly conflict of learning and reason, but have thought it safer to calumniate us in private, and ignore us in public, as if we either had no existence at all, or possessed such feeble vitality as to be below contempt.

The last shift of weakness is to shut one's eyes to dangers which we have neither power to avert nor courage to meet; and we pity, rather than severely blame, a clergy who are obliged, as a choice of evils, to allow such a publication as the CATHOLIC LAYMAN to circulate for five years at the rate of above 120,000 copies annually, without any attempt to answer or counteract it, except by unfounded assertions, which every man of common intelligence and candour, who has had the courage to read a page of it, must know to be calumnious and untrue.

If we have ever been severe in our comments, it has been on the pusillanimity of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and priesthood, in declining the amicable arena of calm discussion, which we endeavoured to open for them; and which, if they really have truth on their side, must have led to a large accession of Protestants to the ranks of their religion.

If they were conscious of possessing the invaluable treasures of religious truth, why should they despair of converting many of those intelligent Protestants who, though educated in what they call heresy and error, are ever ready to listen to those who differ with them, when addressed in the calm spirit which befits the advocate of religious truth?

Protestants in Ireland have no Archbishop Cullen to deter them, by either persuasion or threats, from *hearing both sides*, or from reading anything they please in matters of religion; and nothing would be more certain to be read by every thinking Protestant in Ireland than a controversy carried on with learning and ability on both sides, in the temper advocated, and we hope practised, in our pages.

It was, no doubt, a bold attempt to challenge such a conflict, and thousands of Roman Catholics, we have reason to believe (and, indeed, to know), are mortified and ashamed that neither, the priesthood of Ireland or England have availed themselves of such an opportunity to uphold the (supposed) superior learning and truth of their Church in the eyes of the world.

We really think, however, there would have been one thing still bolder than such a challenge; and that was, for the Church of Rome to have accepted it; unless, indeed, their leaders were conscious that their resources and powers were really such as to secure them a victory in the eyes of candid and enlightened men.